

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity,

Session 17, Urban Growth and the Churches

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This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 17, Urban Growth and the Churches.

This is where we're talking about urban growth and churches.

And so, I'm just going to remind you about what we talked about; then we're going to get on to two consequences of urban change and then the responses of the church. So that's where we are, lecture number 13. So that's where we, that's where we belong.

So, okay, just a reminder in terms of the introduction that we had, with the approach of the industrial world and the urban world, a lot of things have changed. And it changed really dramatically. And so, with the industrial age, there's an increase in population.

There's an increase in territorial expansion. There's an increase in economic supplies and demands. And so that has brought about the age, the factory age, here in America, the industrial age and the factory, the age of the factories brought on their own problems.

They especially brought on three problems that the church is going to have to reconcile with. How are we going to attend to people with these problems? And the problems were number one: long hours. It's hard for us to imagine standing at a loom 14 or 16 hours a day, seven days a week, in a kind of sweatshop with no air conditioning in the summer and little heat in the winter and so forth.

Low wages up until 1835 were about a dollar a day for doing all of that. And that's why whole families had to work. Father, mother, all the kids had to go to work in order to bring them enough money in order to kind of support the family.

Also, the division between the extremely wealthy and the very poor was pretty massive. And so, we quoted from Owen Chadwick's book, *The Victorian Church*. And I'm going to go forward for just a minute, but here's a name that's going to come up in a few minutes: Philip Brooks.

So, I won't come back to this slide. So, if you just remember that name, Philip Brooks, I'll be bringing it up again. So don't worry about this.

In terms of the slides, we tried to kind of, by impression, show what city life was like. I mentioned a place where you should go if you're ever in New York. It's a wonderful working museum, but it's the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.

And if you want to get a sense of how people lived in the turn of the century, go to that Lower East Side Tenement Museum. It will, it's, it will shed light in your own life in terms of how people lived. And this slide kind of portrays what life was like for a lot of people and the factories and standing at the looms and the unions.

Then, on the other side of the picture, there are the Newport mansions. And we mentioned, remember when you go to the, I know a couple of you have been to the Newport mansions, but remember when you go there, these were summer homes only. This was just a place where the wealthy went to enjoy eight weeks in the summer.

They had other quite beautiful homes in New York and Upper State New York and so forth. So, the mansions were quite remarkable to see, but I remember what they were. So, summer homes only.

And I had a huge staff just to be able to, just to keep that mansion going all through the year. So, the gap between the rich and the poor was really pretty problematic, which we'll be looking at again. So, okay.

I think that's as far as we got. So, let's look at two consequences of urban change. And then, number three, we're going to look at the responses of the churches.

How did the churches begin to respond to this kind of new world? Okay. Two consequences of urban change. Number one, there were, there were, there were changes in the Protestant population and changes in the Roman Catholic and immigrant population.

So that's the first consequence of the urban change. Changes in Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, as well as immigration populations, In terms of the changes in pop, in Protestantism, there were ever-increasing numbers of Protestants who strayed away from the church.

There was an ever-increasing number of Protestants for whom the church was no longer relevant, for whom the church was no longer, no longer important. They either ignored the church or were sometimes antagonistic toward the church. So Protestantism found itself having a difficult time adjusting to this whole urban change and this whole industrialization that we're going through, especially Protestants in relationship to the church.

Roman Catholics and other immigrant churches like the Lutheran churches, for example, didn't have quite as difficult a time, interestingly enough, because Roman Catholics and other immigrant churches stayed connected to their churches. It was in their churches that they found a family home in sometimes a hostile environment. And so Roman Catholics, immigrant churches like the Lutherans or Jewish people, they were, they found a home in the church.

They stayed connected with the church. They stayed tied to the church or the synagogue because that was their place of refuge in sometimes a hostile world. So, they did not yet experience what Protestants were experiencing in terms of getting a distance from the church.

These groups will experience upward mobility as you come into the 20th century, but not right yet, not at the kind of the turn of the century, not with the urbanization industrialization that we have. So that is one consequence of this urban change between the consequence of Protestantism and the consequence of Roman Catholicism. Okay.

The second one is that urban change has created a pretty serious gap between people in the church. Churches didn't seem to be able to minister to people in the urban kind of population. So, there was a growing gap, especially as we mentioned among Protestants, between people in the church and especially among Protestants who ignored the church or were hostile toward the church.

So, we're seeing a gap. The question is, what's the church going to do about it? So those are two kinds of consequences of this urbanization, this industrialization that's going on. It is a major change, not only culturally but also in terms of American Christianity, no doubt about that.

Okay. Now, the most important thing here is number C in your outline. What are the responses of the church to urban growth? How did the churches respond to all that we've talked about? So, we're going to give five major responses of the church to urban growth and to industrialization.

In a sense, the last one may be the most important because the last one also leads to the next lecture, the following lecture. Okay. But here are five responses.

Number one. Number one, there are many churches, and here we're talking mainly about Protestantism. So here we're kind of limiting ourselves to Protestantism.

Number one, for many Protestants, there was a pretty dramatic exodus from the city when possible and as soon as possible. Many churches decided that they could not really cope with the problems of urbanization and industrialization. And so, they decided, and these were churches that had enough resources, had enough funds.

They decided they were going to leave the cities and get out of the cities. This first group that made these kinds of decisions to leave the cities really created two problems in terms of their relationship to the growing industrialization and the growing industrial world that they were facing. Number one, they were certainly geographically remote.

They placed themselves to be geographically remote from the problems that urbanization and industrialization had raised. And number two, they found that they were really morally remote from the problems of urbanization and industrialization. They weren't able to come to terms with the growing moral problems that a crowded inner city had created.

So, they're not just geographically remote but morally remote, and they established their churches outside the city as soon as they possibly could, as soon as the funds made it possible for them to do that. Now, that doesn't come to a high point, of course, until the invention of suburbia in the 40s after the Second World War. But it's already beginning here as churches are getting out of this and don't want to face the new reality, the new life that urbanization and industrialization have created.

So, okay, that's one response. The second response is some churches, and we're talking here mainly about Protestantism, but some Protestant congregations weren't able to leave the city. They didn't have the financial wherewithal.

They didn't have the leadership. They didn't have the means to leave the city. So what they do is stay in the city, but they struggle to survive.

And there's no doubt that this struggle to survive put them in a pretty poor position. In their struggle to survive, they created their own small world that was remote from the world right outside the church door. They created their own environment, which had nothing to do with the environment outside the church door.

And so they were, in their struggle to survive, they were often themselves isolated in these churches. Without the means, without the money, and so forth, without the leadership, they weren't able to leave the cities. But on the other hand, they also weren't able to minister to the cities at all.

They didn't have either the means to do it or the vision to do it, or they didn't have the leadership to do it. So, there wasn't really a ministry to the world around them at all. A lot of years ago, probably 45 years ago, I was with a group that went into one of these inner-city churches.

It was actually sad to see because the church was really a very struggling church. They didn't have yet even the money to build, you know, a proper worship place. So,

they were meeting in the basement of the church, and the church was kind of constructed a little bit above them, but they didn't have the money to finish it.

So, we were meeting in the basement of the church, and they were right in the middle of New York City. And yet these, as we went and ministered and talked with these people, they had surrounded the wagons. I mean, they were isolated from what went on outside their church door.

So, they were struggling with two issues. They weren't able to build a proper worship center for themselves. And yet they weren't, and they weren't either capable or didn't have the imagination or the interest of ministering to people beyond the church door.

So, they created their own little kind of sad society. I mean, there they were in the basement of a church, never thinking that the church might come alive if they ministered to the neighborhood around them. But they couldn't seem to do that.

And that's what characterized this second group. That's what characterizes this second group. Stay in the city, but no means, no imagination, no creativity, no, maybe no interest in moving out, pushing out the borders of the church to the neighborhood around them.

Very sad kind of state. But that was true of a lot of Protestant churches. That's where they found themselves.

Okay, number three, the third response to urbanization is industrialization. A lot of Protestant churches stayed in the city, but they were churches of great means. They were churches of wealth.

They had wealth, they had power, and they had influence in the city. And so, they functioned largely around the preacher because sometimes the preacher would have a very charismatic personality, a very, very, very great preacher. And the churches that they built were pretty magnificent churches, but right within the city.

So, so we're going to see one of those churches, on our second field trip. And it's the church of Phillips Brooks. So, remember I had his name up in the earlier slide, Phillips Brooks.

And we're going to see Trinity Episcopal Church in Boston. Phillips Brooks built that church. And it is a magnificent church in Copley Place in Boston.

So, there were great kinds of churches built. I was just in New York and had to be in New York for a board meeting. When you go into New York City, you will see the great Riverside Church on 125th Street.

Well, that was built by the Rockefellers. It's a massive church. And a very famous preacher came and was preaching at that church for a long time.

But that is on the skyline of New York, in the, in the upper, upper kind of west side of New York, you see Riverside Church. It's a, it's a, it's a massive facility. So, some of these Protestant churches stayed, but they had the means, the leadership, and the preachers to be able to build tremendous structures.

There were, they did appeal, these churches did appeal to the wealthy, to the influential, to what we're going to call in another lecture, the cultured despisers of religion, who were the cultured despisers of religion. People of intellect, people of means, and people of power in the community were despisers of religion. And these churches did appeal to them.

These churches had a ministry to the up and out. It had a ministry to those who were wealthy, influential, and powerful in the culture and society. So that's a good thing.

I mean, somebody has to minister to the up and out, you know. We'll talk about this when we talk about Friedrich Schleiermacher because that was his ministry. You don't have to worry about him now, but that was his ministry.

So that was true of these churches. They really did minister to a very wealthy, influential, powerful clientele. The problem with these churches was not necessarily with Phillips Brooks, although I think there were times when he kind of yielded to this temptation, but the problem with these churches was that they accommodated the biblical message to the wealthy, to the influential, to the powerful.

And there was an accommodation, kind of a watering down of the biblical message. And in order to appeal to these people, but also in order to keep them, maybe sometimes to keep the support of these people in the churches, that becomes problematic. We're going to be showing a video called Thy Kingdom Come.

And we're going to show one particular church. And I, you, it's so visually, you see that so visually in the church that they accommodated the biblical message, the message of the Bible in order to keep their congregation happy. So, the accommodation of the message is to talk about Jesus but not talk about sin.

Don't talk about judgment. Don't talk about hell. Don't talk about what Jesus found offensive, you know, and don't talk about those kinds of things.

Keep your message very simple. And Jesus is a good man and you should follow Jesus, you know. So, there was that temptation.

As I say, we're going to see that here. I have to say that there is not so much with Phillips Brooks. But, but maybe there were times with Phillips Brooks, but not so much with him.

So, we're going to see. So that's number three: large churches appealing to the wealthy within the cities. They have the means and the leadership to stay there.

So, okay, number four, the fourth response to urbanization and industrialization. The fourth response is a realization that there have to be new strategies, new organizations, and new means to reach out to the people in the cities. They're not going to respond to the gospel if it's done in the same old way.

And so there were groups that strategized in new ways to try to reach people within the cities. So, I'm going to mention four of these groups that were very strategic in ministering to people in the inner cities and the inner-city culture who were suffering under industrialization, urbanization, and so forth. Okay.

Number one, there is a group, and I don't have this on the PowerPoint, but it was called the American Sunday School Union. The American Sunday School Union was founded in 1824. Now, the American Sunday School Union, founded at that time, was kind of bringing together this notion, the importance of Sunday school and bringing together Sunday schools for the education of people, to educate people to read and to write so that they can read the scriptures.

So, the American Sunday School Union really reached out to new people. They reached out to the people in the cities, they reached out to the people in who were suffering under urbanization and industrialization, and they were helping to educate them, but they were also helping to educate them in a knowledge of the Bible as well. The American Sunday School Union was very successful in producing a very literate laity for the church because these people that they reached out to, children initially that they reached out to and educated them and taught them to read and they can read the Bible and understand the Bible, these people grew up in the churches.

As they grew up in the churches, they had very good biblical knowledge. And so, the American Sunday School Union really strengthened the work of the church and the ministry of the church in Rua. But you see, that was a new thing.

That's reaching out. That's going out to where the people are, meeting their needs, which was in this case, their educational needs, and then relating those back into the life of the church. So, the American Sunday School Union had a new strategy for them.

We've already mentioned a second group, but the second group was the YMCA. We especially mentioned the YMCA in relation to Dwight L. Moody because he was the president of the YMCA, remember, in Chicago. We've said this before, but the YMCA was founded as an evangelical movement to reach out initially to young men working in the cities and to not just help them educationally, not just help them socially, not just help them physically, but to minister them spiritually as well.

So, the YMCA was a spiritual movement that ministered to the whole person. And it was very successful. Now, in America, we've already said that America, perhaps in other places in the world, has kept to their initial, what their initial mission was.

But in America, in fact, they've changed their name to the Y. So it hasn't quite maintained that. But certainly, it was a new strategic evangelical movement that reached men in urban centers. Number three, I'll just mention the Salvation Army quickly here.

But the Salvation Army was founded in 1865 in England. So it wasn't founded here in America. It came to America officially in 1880.

But the Salvation Army was a ministry, and primarily is still today, but it was a ministry to people in the inner cities, to people who were undergoing urbanization, industrialization, and so forth. So that would be my third group, the Salvation Army. They ministered to people by moving in with people in the inner cities, living with them, and ministering to them as part of a holistic ministry, not only of body but of spiritual life as well.

The philosophy of the Salvation Army was and still is, but the philosophy is that if you minister to people socially or minister to people in terms of health or physical needs, you're not recognizing them as persons unless you minister to them spiritually as well. It's only as you minister to them spiritually as well as materially that you're recognizing their holistic, their personhood. So, to only minister to them physically and not to minister to them spiritually is not to recognize them as persons.

And that was the whole moving into the cities and working in the cities and ministering in the cities, that was the whole initial ministry of the Salvation Army. So that's number three. Number four we've already seen, and number four would be the non-denominational revivalism that came through Finney coming into the cities, through Moody coming into the cities, that non-denominational revivalism.

And we've called, I remember what that was called, this is the camp meeting come to the city. And it's very interesting that for both Finney and Moody, maybe a little more so for Finney than for Moody, but for both Finney and Moody, they really didn't know how their ministry would be taken in the city. They didn't know if city

people were going to really be attracted by their ministry, by their kind of revivalistic ministry.

So, they went to the cities with a bit of fear and trepidation because what was going to happen? Are people going to come to our meetings and so forth? And what Finney and Moody found, of course, was a tremendous response to their revivalism in the urban setting. They were shocked to see what a great response there was to their ministry. And that was true also when they went to England.

When they went to England, they were a bit, are people going to listen to us? Are we going to get crowds? And, of course, the crowds were massive. It's very interesting that Billy Graham had the same concern in his early ministry. He was a boy from Carolinas.

He didn't know if his revivalism would take in the cities. And especially, it's very interesting. We'll talk a little more about Graham when we talk about evangelicalism, fundamentalism, and evangelicalism.

But it's very interesting, his first trip to England, he felt the same way Finney and Moody did when they traveled to England. Are people going to receive me? I'm not sure. There's a bit of opposition in England.

Billy Graham went to England, and his revivals were very, very successful in terms of numbers and so forth. So, non-denominational revivalism. Okay, now one author looks at non-denominational revivalism in the cities and says one of the reasons it was, well, it was successful for spiritual reasons.

People came to the Lord; people came back to churches. However, there were three cultural reasons for the success of non-denominational revivalism. So, let's mention those three cultural barriers initially and then the reasons for the success of this fourth way of ministering to the urban world.

So, three things. Number one, non-denominational revivalism penetrated the anonymity that had grown up in these American cities. People were, in spite of the fact that they maybe lived in New York or Philadelphia or Boston with hundreds of thousands of people around them or millions of people around them, people were very, very, very lonely.

They felt extremely isolated and anonymous. The anonymity was kind of killing to them in their loneliness. What they found out in the revivalistic meetings is that they really weren't alone.

They came together with other people. They were counseled by other people. They entered back into churches with other people.

And so, they found a community that they had missed, that they had missed out on by living and working in the city. So, non-denominational revivalism penetrated the anonymity and the loneliness, the lonely crowds in a sense. So, it was very successful in that kind of way.

So that's one thing. Number two, people who lived in the city, their life was very, very monotonous. They went and worked in the factory 14 hours a day, sometimes seven days a week, standing at the loom or sitting at the sewing machine.

That's all you did, 14 hours a day, seven days a week. There was a monotony to that that was simply deadening. What the revivals did was the revivals gave them an excitement that they didn't have in their everyday life.

So, it was this kind of cultural achievement that the revivals broke up the monotony of urban living. There was excitement at the revivalistic meetings, and the preachers were excited, and the life that they held forth for people to enjoy in Christ was exciting. And so that's number two, the cultural kind of thing that the non-denominational revivalism achieved, I guess you could say.

Okay, number three. The third thing that non-denominational revivalism achieved was a substitute for the theater. Now you're going to find this in our culture, in our day, you're going to find this a little strange.

A substitute for the theater. Now, remember when we're talking about the theater here in now, back in the 19th century, at the turn of the century, we're talking about the live theater. We're not talking about going to movies.

We're talking about the live theater. For many people, especially those who grew up in churches and had some kind of consciousness, theater was off-limits to them. The theater was a place of sinfulness.

The theater was a godless place. And so, the music and the drama and the comedy and so forth was really pagan, godless, and people didn't go to the theater. It's interesting that what non-denominational revivalism did for people in the cities was it created an option for the theater.

When they went to the revival meeting, they heard music and singing, and sometimes there might be some dancing. So, the non-denominational revivalism replaced the theater but as a healthy place of entertainment and not as a kind of pagan place of entertainment. So, non-denominational revivalism, that kind of professional revivalism, accomplished these three kinds of cultural things.

We would see non-denominational revivalism in their success and also in spiritual terms, but there were three cultural things that really penetrated the culture in these three pretty dramatic ways. So that's number four. That's a fourth way of kind of coming to grips with urban growth and so forth.

Number five is theological. So, I'll stop there for just a minute, but are there any questions about number four? Four major ways. We're going to talk about the fifth in a minute.

Any question about the four major ways in kind of coming to grips with the urban culture, with industrialization, with a new world? Yeah. So obviously, people were working six days a week. Sometimes seven.

So, when did they generally have meetings? Right. That's why one of the new measures for Phinney was to have revival meetings at a time when they might be able to go, and that would be noontime if they were out on a half-an-hour lunch break or a 45-minute lunch break or it could get stretchy, or evening meetings. It started maybe at nine or 10 o'clock they could go in the evening.

Now, after 1835, there was quite a bit of legislation passed about a six-day work week and a raising of the salaries and so forth. So, people had Sundays. When we get into Phinney and Moody, people have Sundays to go and hear the revivalists.

So, they can go during lunch break, they can go in the evening, late evening after they've worked all day, which was not easy to do, and they can go on Sundays. So, they had three kinds of opportunities. But that's why Phinney developed his new measures.

So, we're not just going to worship on Sunday. That's the old way. We're going to worship at noontime, and we're going to worship in the evenings.

So that's why he took those new measures to create opportunities for those people. The third, or just the three, just those three. Then, we've given four major ways in which the church has responded to urbanization, industrialization, and so on.

Now, we're going to give the fifth major way in which it responds. And I saved it to five because it led to the next lecture. But before I do, because the fifth is theological, but before I do, are there any questions about these first four ways in which churches, especially Protestant churches, responded to a new reality, really? We haven't seen this kind of life ever in the history of humanity.

Remember, we said that New York, the Lower East Side of New York, was the most densely populated place in the entire world at the time? So, we are into a new reality

here, and a really difficult one, no doubt about that. You mentioned the Salvation Army.

Yeah. They didn't form their own communities, but they moved into the same buildings; they shared the apartments, and they shared the labor. And then what they did, and we'll talk a little bit more about this when we talk about evangelicalism, but they also created programs that made it easier for the people who were working in the factories to do their work.

So, they created, for instance, daycare centers where in the tenement, there would be a place where we would watch your kids while you go to the factory. We know you still have to go to the factory, but instead of having to take your kids along with you, we'll take care of them for you. So sometimes it was families.

Mostly in terms of the real slums. I mean the real hard, hard slum work. It was mostly single people doing this.

But sometimes, families felt called to do this, so they felt that it was their ministry to do this. But they were able to create, and also a big, it sounds kind of silly to us, I guess, but in terms of when the mother and the father go to work and we've got the kids downstairs, and in a little daycare center, we can also clean their homes for them. We can bring fresh water into the apartment for them.

We can do the shopping for them and bring some food for them. In other words, to make their life a little more manageable. But communities were definitely created in the terms we would always invite; the Army would always invite people to worship on Sunday at their local churches, and so forth.

So, there was a full community kind of understanding there. But in a time when a lot of churches deserted the cities and left people at their own devices, maybe it was good. So, the American Sunday School Union was also very successful.

The YMCA was very successful. The Army, and then we mentioned non-denominational revivalism. Something else here about these four ways.

Okay, let's go to the fifth. I'll give you five seconds, and we'll go to the fifth. And then we'll transition to the next.

One, two, three, four, five. All right, that takes care of that. Stretching.

I don't feel too bad for you because on Wednesday and Friday, what are you doing when I'm in New York? You're writing. You're not resting. You're not resting, are you? On Wednesday and Friday during this time, you're writing your what? Your papers.

You're writing your papers—first draft. So, you can give them to me so I can help you with them.

That's what you're doing. You could also be preparing for the exam. So, there could be a couple of things.

Okay, I'll be thinking of you. Okay, number five. What is the fifth response of the churches to urban growth? Number five.

The fifth response is a radical re-understanding of the gospel. The fifth response is a theological response. Radically, I totally re-understood the gospel.

Developing a new theology. Developing a theology that will meet, head on, meet urban life for the sake of the gospel. So that's the fifth response.

A radical reinterpretation of the gospel. A new theology. Now, sometimes, that new theology goes by a name, and it's called the social gospel.

Now, we don't yet; we're not going to be talking quite about the social gospel for another couple of lectures. But just keep that in mind. But the other thing, now that I think of it, the other thing that you're doing while I'm gone is you're reading the Rauschenbusch biography.

In fact, you've already started. And you're doing a chapter a week. Aren't you doing a chapter a week on the Rauschenbusch biography? And you're not letting that go until the night before the final exam, are you? Bless your hearts, no.

So, you're reading the Rauschenbusch biography. He was the father of the social gospel movement. So, we'll see that.

Okay, so that's lecture number 13, urban growth in the churches. Okay, lecture number 14. Now, notice in your syllabus that we're moving now into a new kind of time in terms of the course.

This is part four of the course, modern America, 1918 to the present. So, we're moving into a new time frame now. And the first thing in this new time frame is lecture number 14, liberal theology in America.

What I'm going to do is give an introduction. That's probably all I have time for today. So, let's do the introduction.

So okay, in American life, from the Civil War to the end of World War I to the time of World War I, and from the Civil War to the time of World War I, there were great changes in American cultural and social life. And we've already seen many of those

changes. So, but among those changes were people who were very confident about the future.

Very, between, after the Civil War and before World War I, 1914, very confident of the future, very imaginative for the future, very, let's see if I've got another word here, very progressive in terms of what the future would hold. So, there were people who really felt that the future was going to be a good and promising kind of future. Now, a lot of changes have taken place theologically in society that we've already seen.

But some changes also took place theologically. So, let me mention the major change that took place theologically. And that was the change in the nature of authority.

The change over the nature of authority. Authority is the keyword here. And we're talking basically within the Protestant churches.

Okay, so absolute authority. Absolute authority for Protestantism had basically been upon the scriptures and upon the scriptures revealing God in Christ to us. That was the bedrock of authority for Protestantism.

So, Protestantism stands upon the scriptures, stands upon the Bible, and stands upon the main message of the Bible, which is God has come to redeem us in Christ, and the Holy Spirit ministers to us about that great reality. That has been the great authority of Protestant churches. That is beginning to shift.

There is a major challenge to that authority that is starting to take place. And the major challenge to authority, to that authority, in a sense, and I'm not just, but in a sense, it begins with Darwinism. It begins with the value of science.

And it begins with a value of social change over the authority of the scriptures. So, those kinds of challenges come into the church. Darwinism is a creation from below instead of a creation from above.

The kind of intellectual challenges to the scriptures and social changes that challenge the authority of the scriptures. So, the nature of authority is challenged. And Protestants are beginning to understand the Bible in new and different ways.

No doubt about that. That becomes problematic. That creates a movement that we generally call classical Protestant liberalism.

So classical Protestant liberalism comes into its own in the 18th century, 19th century, but then when you start to come into the 20th century, classical Protestant liberalism starts to come into its own and to challenge the nature of authority that Protestantism has always held. That is the authority of the scripture and the main

message of the scripture. That is God in Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and so forth.

The main redemptive message of the scriptures. Okay, now liberalism has found its way into three major kinds of institutions. Once the thinking of Protestant liberalism finds its way into these three institutions, it has a powerful impact on American Christianity.

So let me mention the three institutions. Number one, the leading Protestant seminaries was affected by classical Protestant liberalism. So major Protestant seminaries were affected by this.

Some were able to hold out, but many of them kind of caved into American Protestant liberalism and classical Protestant liberalism. That becomes problematic because if the leading seminaries are teaching something different from the authority of the Bible and they're teaching preachers, then the preachers are going to go out into the churches and they're going to teach what they've heard in the seminaries. So, okay, so that leads us to number two.

The second one is some of the major pulpits. Some of the major pulpits of the churches were pulpits that had classical Protestant liberal preachers in them. So, if some of the major pulpits in the seminary had that, then the churches were going to be swayed by Protestant liberal teaching. That's number two.

And number three, of course, leading publications. Leading publications will, if they're affected by classical Protestant liberalism, they're going to publish the message of classical Protestant liberalism. Now, there was one publication in particular that began kind of at the turn of the century, and we'll talk about it later.

But it was called, and the title is very important to take note of. It was called The Christian Century. The Christian Century. Because it was believed by the people who began the publication, it was believed that the 20th century was going to be the Christian century.

And so it was published, it began publication before World War I, obviously, but the Christian century, very optimistic, very kind of progressive, very kind of imaginative thinking about what the 20th century is going to be. So, this becomes kind of problematic. If the seminaries, the pulpits, and the publications are all challenging the Protestant notion of the authority of the scriptures, there's going to be a problem.

There's going to be kind of a battle at hand, and we'll see that as well. So, okay. Now, there were two characteristics of this movement called classical Protestant liberalism.

So, what I want to do is picture the two characteristics of a coin, and there are two sides to the coin. And you can't kind of divide the coin in half otherwise it's without value. So, the coin is only valuable if you remember the two sides keeping kind of clued together.

So, there are two characteristics of classical Protestant liberalism. Okay, the first is freedom from tradition. Classical Protestant liberalism tried to free itself from tradition.

It found that the tradition of the church was too oppressive. We've got to be free from the tradition of the church, and one of those freedoms was freedom from authority, especially the authority. If you're looking, if authority is the authority of scripture, you've got to be free from that.

So that's one side of the coin: freedom from tradition. The second side of the coin was an adjustment to the modern world, an adjustment to modernity, adjusting to the modern world. Now, part of that adjustment to the modern world was adjusting the biblical message to the modern world so that the biblical message will be appealing to modern people.

So, there's a freedom from tradition on the one hand, there's an adjustment to the modern world on the other hand, and that's going to create a movement that we call classical Protestant liberalism. And that will be problematic, I have to say. So let me just finish by saying one more thing, and I don't know if I'll take the time.

I don't think the three strategies take a long time, but let me say one more thing by way of introduction. There would be a pushback to classical Protestant liberalism. Classical Protestant liberalism would gain pretty strong ground, especially at the turn of the century, but there would be a pushback to classical Protestant liberalism.

And that pushback, which is very interesting, is going to come from two sources, or it's going to come from two movements. And we just want to keep both of those movements in mind here in this introduction, and then when we come across them, we'll kind of remind ourselves about them as well. Okay, the first movement that's going to push back on this is a movement called Fundamentalism.

This is basically limited to Protestantism, but Protestant Fundamentalism will definitely be a pushback to this kind of classical Protestant liberalism. We spend quite a bit of time on American fundamentalism because it's very important to understand American fundamentalism in relation to the broader Christian story in America. That's the first pushback.

The second pushback is going to be a movement called Neo-Orthodoxy. Neo-Orthodoxy, historically and chronologically, is going to come after Fundamentalism, but Neo-Orthodoxy is going to be a movement where people take the Bible very seriously, just like Fundamentalism took the Bible seriously. So, Neo-Orthodoxy is going to take the Bible very seriously, but they're going to interpret the Bible basically through the lenses of the Reformers.

So, Neo-Orthodoxy is going to be a movement that takes the Bible seriously but mainly reads the Bible through the eyes of basically of John Calvin. So, they're going to bring back, in some ways, not in all ways, but in some ways they're going to bring back that Calvinistic tradition into American public life. So classical Protestant liberalism is not just going to run kind of wild without people responding to it.

And those responses are going to be pretty major responses in American Christianity, pretty decisive responses. So, we'll be seeing those in another lecture. Now, just look at this for a minute.

Look at number B, and then this is where we'll pick up when we come together again for a lecture. When is this? Two weeks from Wednesday. So, try to remember this, two weeks from today. OK, so look at this number B, though.

What we're going to do now, I won't start this, but what we're going to do now is there are three strategies that classical Protestant liberalism has for saving Christianity. Classical Protestant liberalism was convinced that Christianity was in trouble. And so, they have three theological kinds of strategies by which they are going to try to save American Christianity, very interesting strategies that we'll talk about when we return.

OK, bless your hearts. Well, we'll stop here.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 17, Urban Growth and the Churches.